

AN ADDRESS
To the CONGREGATION
AT THE
NEW CHAPEL,
DAGGER-LANE,
KINGSTON-UPON-HULL.

In which is Vindicated,
THE DOCTRINE
Of Justification;

BY S. BARNARD, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL,

He that is first in his own cause seemeth just : but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

SOLOMON.

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BRITISH METHODISM

AN ADDRESS, &c.

Dearly beloved Brethren.

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

IT gives me no small degree of pleasure, to find that I have another opportunity of addressing you in the defence of those *truths* which I have *preached* to you, since God in his providence cast my lot among you.—I write not now to maintain a mere logical point, but to vindicate the *truth*, as it is in Jesus; which ought not to be palliated in order to accommodate it to the vicious and corrupt inclinations of any man; but faithfully and fully declared, whatever be the event, for the soul that is *born of God*, will not be satisfied without the *living bread*; and the *carnal mind* will not be satisfied, so long as one *spiritual truth* remains. So that either the children will cry because their *food* is taken away, or the *enemies of Christ*, will hiss at the bread of life.

A few days ago a Sermon was put into my hands, which the writer thereof calls *Eternal justification unmasked*, and as the scope of it (I find) tends to subvert some of the fundamental truths of the gospel, and perplex the minds of the readers; I therefore thought it my duty to fortify your minds against those *errors* and *absurdities* which so manifestly abound therein.

The author you may observe, begins his *preface* with a great deal of bustle and noise about

ignorance, pride, boasting, &c." so that one is almost led to think, that he is one of those *windy, vain, frothy, all-tongued, boasting, empty professors* which he makes mention of in his next page.

He then produces a great number of heavy charges against some person or persons, such as "*being affraid to come to the light—their being ashamed of their tenets—heaping odiums upon the servants of Christ—dissuading their credulous and ignorant bearers to keep from every faithful minister, &c.*" but as every discerning person who is acquainted with the *author*, will be able to see what all this *rancour* springs from; and knowing that the *truth* wants nothing of this kind for its support, I shall pass it by and not render *railing* for *railing*. Beside we may suppose that he gave us the *best* which he was at that time in possession of; and if a man give us the best he has, we can desire no more; therefore let us look forwards for something better.

The writer in the first page of his Sermon informs us, that "*Errors are pleasant dainties on which ignorance delights to feed;*" and really one would imagine by his following pages, that he speaks from his own experience, for he seems to me to be in the possession of no small number of them, but as I wish to be as brief as I can; let us proceed now to page the 8th to the article of *Justification*; which we need not be *affraid*, nor yet *ashamed* to do.

In the above-mentioned page we are told, that "*Justification is not an holy and heavenly disposition of mind wrought in the soul*"—we grant it. "*It is not a work of the holy spirit in our hearts,* this also is granted by us,—"*but it is an act of*
grace

grace towards a BELIEVING SINNER ;” that is you know a SAINT ; for every real believer is a sanctified person, so that the object of justification you find is a SAINT.

Now look at the bottom of his 14th page, and there he tells you with Saint Paul, that *God justifies* the UNGODLY ; so that these two put together make up the author’s *object* of justification ; which is an UNGODLY SAINT ; alas what a Monster !!! where shall we find one ? is there such an one in HEAVEN ? no, for there dwells nothing but righteousness, or righteous beings. Are there any such in HELL, no, for no such compound beings inhabit those dark regions. Can such a being be found upon the EARTH ? no, for all that dwell upon the earth are either *Saints* or *ungodly Sinners* ; that is they either possess the spirit and grace of God in their hearts, or they are sensual *having not the spirit*. Now as the author’s object of justification, viz. an UNGODLY SAINT, cannot be found neither in *Heaven, Earth, nor Hell*, nor any where else except in his *own imagination* ; we must conclude that he has given his Sermon a very *wrong title* ; for instead of *unmasking* justification in any sense ; he has *masked* it in every sense ; therefore we must call it for the future *Justification masked*. Now had he left out the word *believing*, and said that justification is an act of God’s *grace towards a sinner*, we should have agreed with him, as well as with Saint Paul, who tells us that God justifies the *ungodly*, in which state HE viewed his people in *Adam* before the choice was made, or it could not

not have been to *salvation*, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. *

It is a pity his *revisers* if he had any, did not discover the *blunder* and inform him better, because such things do hurt to the cause which he professes to maintain.

In page the 9th he tells us, that “*God’s justified people are not only pardoned and delivered from eternal torment ; but they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ,*” which though a truth, it is not the meaning of this text, for the passage to which he alludes reads thus ; Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ ; and the apostle adds in the following verse, according as he hath *chosen* us in him before the foundation of the world ; therefore what Paul means to prove is, that all God’s *chosen ones* were blessed with all *spiritual blessings* in Christ before the foundation of the world ; and as *justification* is one of those blessings, they must be blessed with that as *early* ; and this is the obvious meaning of the passage.

He mentions also in the same page, “*a comparative justification,*” and unfortunately produces to prove it, the case of the *Publican* and *Pharisee*. † Now you may observe that in a comparison between two things, we say one is *so*, and the other is *more so*. Thus for instance in comparing wood with iron, we say *wood* is hard, but *iron* is harder ; but here you have to remember that both the wood and the iron *exist*. Now we are told in the passage under consideration,

* 2 Thes. ii. 13. † Luke xviii. 14.

that the Publican went down to his own house justified, (viz. in his own conscience) rather than, or *and not* the other. Now where in the name of common sense the author can find his *comparison*, I cannot conceive; for seeing one *was* justified and the other *not* justified, no comparison can be made between them. 'Tis a pity the author turned out his thoughts in such a crude, indigested state.

But we must hasten now it seems to consider “ *whether justification be an eternity, or time act,*” which our author proposes in page 10th, to “ *try by the word of God*” and to which we have no objection, being neither *affraid*, nor *ashamed*.

He proceeds to inform us, “ *that the notion of eternal justification appears to him a most dangerous one,*” and proposes to “ *point out to us its dreadful tendency, to ruin the souls of his fellow sinners;*” and no doubt but he would inform us also, that the notion of *eternal election* is full as dangerous, and has the same tendency to ruin their souls as eternal justification; since they are both immanent acts of God, and this I have reason to believe, on reading his 15th page, on which I shall shortly make some remarks.

He then proceeds to inform us, that “ *in the scripture, we read of justification as something to be done in future;* (which he tells us) *would be a fault, if justification was from eternity.*”

Now in order to harmonize the scriptures on this subject, you have to keep in mind, that very necessary distinction, between our *justification*, or freedom from condemnation *before God*; and our *justification*, or freedom from condemnation *in our own consciences*; the former is
through

through the redemption that is in Christ, * and the latter is enjoyed by faith, by which alone, we have peace with God.

Having made this remark, let us proceed now to examine those scriptures which he brings to prove, that “ *Justification is something to be done in future,*” one of which reads thus. Now it was not written for his (viz. Abraham’s) sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it *shall* be imputed if we believe, &c. † from which passage he undoubtedly means to suggest, that Christ’s righteousness is not imputed to God’s people till they believe. Now our Lord uses the very same form of speech to his disciples, as is used by the apostle in the above-mentioned passage. Herein (says Christ) is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, *so shall ye be my disciples*, ‡ now, as it is evident that they were his disciples at this time, our Lord could only mean; that their bearing fruit would make it manifest. § So here also, in the passage quoted by the author of *Justification masked*, when the apostle says, *to whom it SHALL be imputed*, he only means; that such as believe as Abraham did, it is manifest that they have the same righteousness imputed to them as he had. Beside the persons among whom the apostle includes himself, must be supposed to be real believers, by which it was manifest that the righteousness of Christ was imputed to them already. Now, if righteousness be not imputed till we believe, then it is not till then accepted of the Father; but if it be accepted of the Father at all, it is accepted on the behalf of all

* Rom. iii. 24. † Rom. iv. 23, 24. ‡ John xv. 8. § see also John xiv. 21.

his people ; and if accepted, it must be imputed, and if imputed, all those to whom it is imputed, must be justified *before God*.

But the import of the author's reasoning is this ; Christ has wrought out a righteousness, which the Father has accepted in the behalf of his people ; but he never imputes, or puts it to their account till they believe ; than which nothing can be more false, for it cannot be accepted a *moment* on the behalf of his people, before it is imputed to those people, on whose behalf it is accepted of the Father.

The next passage of scripture which he produces to prove that "*justification is something to be done in future*" is, where the apostle addresses the Galatians saying, the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen (viz. in their own consciences) through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, &c. * by which we may learn, that the same righteousness which justified Abraham *before God*, justifies his people among the Gentiles before him. That this same doctrine of Christ's righteousness imputed for justification *before God*, is preached also among the Gentiles : to whom faith would be given to lay hold of and receive this righteousness, whereupon God would pronounce the sentence of justification in their consciences ; from whence follow peace and joy in the holy Ghost. And here my brethren, I would wish you to remember, that whenever faith is connected with justification, it either relates to Christ and his righteousness the object of faith ; or has respect to justification, in

* Gal. iii. 8.

the conscience of the believer, in which sense it is that justification is spoken of as *something to be done in future*.

He tells us likewise, “*that the gospel was preached many years before the Gentiles were justified.*” Now if he mean before the Gentiles were justified in their own consciences, we grant it, but if he mean *before God*, we deny it; for in that sense they were justified as elect,* and not as *believing sinners* or saints,† and therefore must be justified, or freed from condemnation before God from *eternity*; and for my part I cannot see how they that hold the one, can deny the other. And as to the “*gospel being preached from eternity,*” as I never heard any but himself talk so weakly; I shall say no more about it.

This author of *Justification masked*; tells us in page the 11th, that “*the scriptures never speak of men in a state of nature as being in a justified state,*” to which I reply, that the scripture speaks of men as *Elect*, while they are in a state of nature; ‡ and as nothing can be laid to their charge the scripture must speak of men in a state of nature as being justified *before God*; because our *calling* has no influence on our *justification* before God, for Justification is not a work of the holy spirit within us; though till he does so work, no man can know himself to be in a justified state.

He tells us moreover in the same page, *that* “*if they (viz. the Ephesians) had been justified from eternity, they never could have been without*

* Rom. viii. 33. † Rom. iv. 5. ‡ Jude i.

Christ," poor man, it is a pity he did not give this sentence a little more thought before he wrote it ; because then he might have been able to have made a distinction between a man's being *out of Christ* and *without Christ* ; for even the elect themselves while they are in a state of nature are *without Christ*, that is Christ does not dwell in their hearts by faith : but there never was a moment in which they were *out of* him, because they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and preserved in him, and called.

He tells us also in the above mentioned page, that "*it is evident from God's word that unbelievers are condemned.*" Now we should be at a loss to know, whether he means that unbelievers are condemned before God, or in their own consciences ; whether as considered in Adam, or as considered in Christ ; had he not explained his meaning a little lower down, by telling us, that "*an unbeliever is condemned BEFORE GOD.*" Poor dear man, he little thinks what would follow as consequences if his doctrine were true ; but it will become us however painful, to enquire into them.

"*An unbeliever is condemned before God,*" and as he rightly observes, "*the elect of God were unbelievers before they were brought to know the truth as it is in Jesus,*" therefore the *Elect* must be condemned *before God*.

He then jumbles together a number of scriptures to amuse the readers, and tells them in page 12th, that "*while the elect remain in unbelief, they are condemned,* (viz. before God as he thinks,) for he that believeth not is condemned.

already ; because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." * Now had he said that the elect as *viewed in Adam* are condemned ; we should have agreed with him, because by the offence of one, (*viz. Adam*) judgment came upon all men to condemnation. But the *elect* must be considered in *Christ*, because chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and therefore if the *elect* be condemned before God, *Christ* must be condemned before him, because he is the *head*, and they the *members* ; and if this do not border upon *blasphemy*, I know not what does.

Again this notion, that "*the elect are condemned before God*" overturns the doctrine of the *atonement*, for if the *elect* be condemned before God, their *sin* must be charged before him, for sin and condemnation are inseparable ; and if the sins of the elect stand charged before God, then God cannot be *reconciled*, and if God be not reconciled, the author has no *Gospel* to preach ; for can it be good news for a poor sinner to be informed that notwithstanding *Christ* hath died for sin, yet that very sin for which *Christ* died stands charged before God, and the persons who committed it condemned before him ? surely not, and yet this is the author's opinion if his words have any meaning : so that at the most he can only represent in his preaching, that God is *reconcilable*, and that he will be quite reconciled upon our believing. I am sorry to find him among such company, poor man.

Again if this doctrine were true, *viz. that*

* John iii. 18.

“ *the elect are condemned before God,*” it would be no hard matter to prove that he and all to whom he preaches, must go to *Hell*; for if the sins of God’s people stand charged before him, they must remain charged, for if Christ have not put away sin from before God by the sacrifice of himself, he never will do it; and it is in vain for the author to say that it is put away on our believing, for though faith receives, yet it does not make the atonement; and if sin be charged before God *before* we believe, it must remain charged *after* we have believed for all what faith can do for us. So that every soul upon this plan must go to Hell, for who can go to Heaven with his sins charged, and he condemned before God?

Now the passage which he brings to prove that “ *while the elect remain in unbelief they are condemned before God*” reads thus, he that believeth not is condemned already, &c. and so he is as viewed in Adam, as he is also in his own conscience, but not *before God* as considered *in Christ*; for in that sense there is no condemnation to such.

He proceeds to inform us, that “ *an unbeliever cannot be in a state of SPECIAL FAVOR with God*” that is if I understand him right, God has no particular regard for, or love to an *unbeliever*. Now as he rightly observes the *elect* are unbelievers by nature, therefore the import of his reasoning is, to show that God has no *special* love towards his *elect* till they believe. I would ask then, was it no mark of love or special favor towards the elect, for God

to

to give his Son to die for them? was it no mark of God's special favor for him to send his spirit into their hearts to quicken, regenerate them? &c. though perhaps the author thinks that we believe first, and then God gives us his Son, and sends his spirit into our hearts; and if so, I wish him all the comfort that such a tenet can afford him.

But let us attend now to the text which the author brings to prove, that "*unbelievers cannot be in a state of special favor with God,*" it reads thus, he that believeth not shall be damned. * Now here you have to remark, brethren, that our Lord cannot mean that he that believeth not (now this moment) shall be damned, because many who are now in unbelief may hereafter have faith given them, and they brought to believe to the saving of their souls. It can only mean then, that he that lives and dies in a state of unbelief, shall be damned. And this we acknowledge, which we may do, without saying with the author of *Justification masked*; that "*the elect while unbelievers, cannot be in a state of special favor with God.*" Now had he said that the elect while in a state of unbelief are not *known to be* in a state of special favor with God; we should have agreed with him, for although God loves his people with an everlasting love, yet it cannot be known to themselves nor others, till they are called by grace.

He then proceeds to close the 12th page by telling us, that "*the unbelief of Israel of old sorely grieved the Lord and made him angry, that he swore in his wrath that they should not enter*

into his rest, so that we see they could not enter in because of unbelief. Thus it appears from God's own word, that no unbeliever can be in a justified state". (page 13th)

Now the scope of the author's reasoning is as follows; viz. because Israel entered not into the land of Canaan on account of their unbelief, therefore the elect while in a state of unbelief cannot be justified *before God* in the righteousness of Christ. What reasoning!!

For although unbelief kept Israel out of the land of Canaan, unbelief will never keep the elect out of Heaven. For faith is one of those spiritual blessings, which is treasured up in Christ for them; they are chosen to and through it to salvation; and (all the spiritual Israel) shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation. Beside the rest spoken of in the above-mentioned passage is not a type of Heaven, but of the *spiritual rest* of the saints which they that believe enter into. So that this passage is nothing at all to his purpose. He closes the paragraph by saying, "*therefore we must be justified when we believe and not before.*" Now if he mean in our own consciences we grant it, but if he mean before God we deny it; till he can prove that the righteousness of Christ is not accepted in the behalf of his people till they believe.

We are now come to a very particular part of the subject, which you my brethren would do well to attend to, we have presented to our view

" An O B J E C T I O N;

*Nothing can be laid to the charge of God's elect;
therefore*

therefore they must have been justified from eternity; as they were elected from eternity.

A N S W E R.

“ *The apostle does not say that nothing can be laid to their charge because they are elect; but nothing can be laid to their charge because they (the elect) are justified.*” If this man had a good cause in hand he would make it appear a *bad* one; for he has now acknowledged in his answer all that we, and the apostle contend for; namely, that **THEY, the elect** are justified *before God*. That being the case the apostle says, who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? it is God that justifies, (viz. the elect) who is he that condemneth? * The answer is, the author of *Justification masked* does. But leaving him and the apostle to settle this matter, could you have thought when the writer first set off, that he would so soon have become a preacher of that faith which he once destroyed? but however so it is.

We proceed now to take notice of that scripture which speaks of vocation, or calling before justification, which our author seems to think militates against the notion of eternal justification. It is this; *whom he called, them he also justified.* † Now you have to remember, that the order of words in scripture does not always express the order of things, for even the order of the persons in the *Trinity* is not always kept to, for sometimes the *Son* is placed before the *Father*, and at other times the *holy Spirit* before them both; which though it proves their

* Rom. viii. 33, 34. † Rom. viii. 30.

equality, yet does not destroy the order among them. So also with respect to *vocation*; it is sometimes placed before *election*, as where the apostle says, make your calling and election sure. Again, they that are with the Lord are called, chosen and faithful. * But we cannot conclude from thence, that they were called before they were chosen, because Paul tells us to the contrary.

But however, suppose we attend to the order of the words, and say *whom he called, them he also justified*; there is then nothing unnatural in the passage, for though a man is justified before God *as elect*, as Saint Paul says, and as the author has proved, yet he is not justified or freed from condemnation in his own *conscience* till after he is called; which without doubt is what the apostle means, if the order of the words must be attended to.

He begins his 14th page with something about “*a nose of wax*,” but as I never made one, I can say but little about it. And—

As to persons, “*resting the scriptures to their own destruction*.” I shall only say, that if any body ever did so, it appears to me to be the author of *Justification masked*; for he has so rested the scriptures already, as to overturn the atonement, and the doctrine of justification, and without these, destruction must follow of course.

He next informs us in the above-mentioned page, that “*eternal justification is not only contrary to the scripture, but to reason also*,” and tries to prove it thus: “*before we were brought into being, we could neither be justified nor condemn-*

* 2 Pet. i. 10. Rev. xvii. 14

ed, for nothing can be predicated, (or affirmed) of that which is not," says our author.

Now here you may observe, that he denies upon this ground the doctrine of eternal *election*; for if nothing can be affirmed of that which is not, or has no actual being, Paul did very wrong to affirm that we were *chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world*, as he did also when he said, *God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation*; for says the author, "nothing can be predicated, or affirmed of that which is not."

But however as Paul has affirmed, that God's people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and blessed with all spiritual blessings as early; and that nothing can be laid to their charge "*because they (the elect) are justified,*" then we need not be affraid to affirm the same things, of the same people.

Now be it remembered, that although God's elect have not an *actual* being from eternity, yet it was certain with God that they should have one; for known unto him are all his works from the beginning, or from eternity.* Beside it should be remembered also, that the elect have a *representative* being in Christ, even such a being as makes them capable of being blessed in him with all spiritual blessings, and why not capable of being justified in him? since justification is not a work that is wrought *in* them, but an act of grace *towards* them, as election is.

He next proceeds to inform us, that "*as justification is a law term, it supposes 1st. a law-giver, 2d. a law, 3d. a court of judicature*; and

* Acts xv. 18.

tells us, *there could be no law-giver before the law was given, nor could there be a law given, before there was any person to give it to; neither can a person be brought before a judge prior to his existence.*"

Now, let it be remembered by you my brethren; that Christ was set up as *mediator* of his people from *everlasting*, from the *beginning*, or *ever the earth was*; even then his delights were with the sons of men. * And a mediator implies an offender; an offender implies an offence, or sin; sin implies a law; and a law implies a law-giver. So that God considered his people as lost creatures in Adam, before the choice was made, or it could not have been to salvation, but then God's choice of his people was not to prevent their falling by sin; but to prevent their falling into *Hell* on the account of their sin. And as God chose his people to salvation; salvation implies bondage, bondage implies sin, sin implies a law and a transgressor, and a law implies a law-giver. Thus,

“ His busy thoughts at first,
On their salvation ran;
E'er sin was born or Adam's dust,
Was fashioned to a man.”

Watts.

It is worth remarking also, that in the covenant of grace among the sacred three before all worlds, Christ became a *surety* and promised to come and do the will of God, on the behalf of all his people; he is therefore called *the surety of a better testament*, or covenant. † Now a surety implies a debtor, a debtor im-

* Prov. viii. 23,—31. † Heb. vii. 22.

plies a debt, or sin ; sin implies a law, and a law implies a law-giver. Therefore if the author wish to do any thing to purpose, he must *First*, overturn the doctrine of *Election* ; *Secondly*, prove that Christ did not sustain the office of *mediator* from everlasting ; and *Thirdly*, that he in the covenant of grace did not stand in the office capacity of a *surety* for his people, for without proving these, his reasoning has no force.

He then goes on and tells us, that “ *God justifies none but sinners, ungodly sinners,*” but as it is some time since in page 8th, he told us that “ *God justifieth a believing sinner,*” (or saint) this will serve as an apology for the contradiction.

In his 15th page he tells us, “ *when it pleases the Lord to justify a sinner, a believing sinner,* (or saint) *then he is brought from a state of death into a state of life.*” Now in his 8th page he tells us, that “ *justification is not a work of the holy spirit in our hearts,*” and yet when we are justified we are brought from *death* to *life*. It is a pity, the author was not better acquainted with the difference between *justification* and *sanctification* before he wrote, for then he might have avoided this blunder, as well as many others.

But let us attend to the scripture which he brings to prove, that “ *when God justifies a believing sinner,* (or saint) *he is then brought from death to life.*” It reads thus, *verily, verily I say unto you, he who heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life ; and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.* * Now this text informs us, that

every real believer has spiritual and eternal life; and shall never come into condemnation (viz. before God) but it does not say a word of our not being justified before God in Christ's righteousness till we believe; nor of our being delivered from condemnation before God, upon our believing, therefore the text is nothing to his purpose; and yet he adds after quoting it, "*you see then, before we believe, we are condemned,*" so it seems that the writer thinks, that our believing puts away condemnation from before God. But if he can see that the elect are condemned before God till they believe, he has better eyes than I have, or than Paul had; for he declares that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, * and a man must have good eyes indeed, to see condemnation where there is none.

He goes on however to inform us, that "*the ever blessed God did intend from all eternity to justify the elect.*"—Wonderful discovery!! but however, if he mean in their own consciences, he is certainly right; but if *before God*, he is as certainly wrong; for although the apostle speaks of being *called* according to his purpose, he no where speaks of being justified *before God* according to his purpose, the one is an act of grace *towards* a sinner, and the other a work of grace *in* the sinner. Therefore although common sense would not say that a man is justified in his *own conscience* from eternity, yet common sense needs not blush when saying, a man is justified *before God* in Christ's righteousness from eternity; and should the author

* Rom. viii. 1.

say that Christ's righteousness was not wrought out till he came in the flesh, and therefore could not be imputed; ask him then in whose righteousness it was, that the saints went to Heaven before the coming of Christ in the flesh, and should he return a judicious and scriptural answer, he will tell you, that justice acquitted all the elect, when in the covenant of grace, Christ their surety promised to come and do the will of God, for they could be detained prisoners no longer, any more than a creditor could detain a debtor after accepting his surety's bond. And as to "*God's people being glorified from eternity,*" that for obvious reasons cannot be, nor do I know any body except the author of *Justification masked* who would talk such nonsense, therefore as it is of his own coining, we are willing he should have it for his own amusement. In the mean while let us proceed to examine what follows.

"Every person who is justified, enters into union with Christ, for Christ dwells in their hearts by faith; but there could be no union before creation, the branch must be made before it can be grafted on that fruitful vine Christ Jesus, (for) while we were unbelievers we were condemned, and so we could not be united to Christ."

Here we may observe, that when we believe we are justified, and when we are justified, we enter into union with Christ; so that if I understand him right, it must be either *faith* or *justification* that unites us to Christ; but which of the two it is, he has not told us. But as being united to Christ by *justification* sounds rather strange to the ear, perhaps the author chuses

chuses to say, we are united to Christ by *faith*; or in other words, that *faith grafts us into Christ*. But then as *faith* is a part of our *sanctification*, it would sound still as odd to the ear of a thinking person, were we to tell him that a man is justified before God by a branch of his sanctification. Again, as no spiritual blessing can be received but out of Christ's fulness, it would be rather a puzzling job for the author, to tell us how we come by *faith* at first, without a previous connexion with that fulness from whence we must receive it; beside it is worth remarking also, that *faith* is not a grace of *union*, but of *communion*.

But we may observe again, this idea of a *time union made by faith* supposes a time when we were *out of Christ*, or there could be no occasion for grafting us in, and then instead of the apostle saying, *he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world*, he should have said, he hath chosen us *out of Christ*, before the foundation of the world, to be grafted into him in time, for the author tells you, "*the branch must be made before it can be grafted on that fruitful vine Christ Jesus.*" So he seems, poor man, to have no idea of any thing but a time election or union, therefore we find that his election and justification before God, bear the same date.

But I must tell you my brethren, for whose instruction I am now writing, that the idea of *grafting into Christ in time*, has not the least foundation in the word of God; and neither the author, nor any other person can bring us one passage of scripture to prove a union to Christ by grafting. The word occurs no where

in the bible that I know of but in the 11th of Romans, and whoever reads the 17th verse of that chapter, must see that the apostle has no such thing as grafting into Christ in view, for it is grafting in *among them* which he there speaks of ; so that the whole scheme of *grafting into Christ by faith*, is a mere *fiction* ; and without foundation in the word of God ; therefore reject it as erroneous.

But we may observe again, the author informs us also that “ *while we were unbelievers we were condemned, and if so, we could not be united to Christ ;*” which implies if we be united to him, we are not condemned ; but justified.

Now Paul tells us, that we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world ; and Jude says, preserved in Christ Jesus and called.*

So that if we were chosen *in* him as above, then we could not be *out* of him ; and if we were preserved *in* him, we were not preserved *out* of him ; and if we were called *in* him, we were not *out* of him when called. Therefore as we were *chosen* in Christ, *preserved* in Christ, and *called* in Christ, then we must be *justified* in Christ ; for as all that are *out* of Christ are *condemned before God*, on account of their sins ; all that are *in* Christ must be justified before God, from every charge that can be brought against them ; for as *out* of him we cannot be justified, so *in* him we cannot be condemned before God. Thus it appears then according to our author’s own reasoning, as it does also from the word of God ; that *eternal election* and *eternal justification* must stand or fall together.

* Eph. i. 4. Jude 1.

I very well know what puzzles the author and those of his sentiments is, their not being able to account for a man's being justified and condemned at the same time. But this difficulty my brethren will soon be removed by considering that all God's people have relation to *two heads*, viz. Adam and Christ, and while they are condemned in the former, they are justified and compleat in the righteousness of the latter. Beside, a man may be justified before God in the righteousness of Christ, as are all the *Elect*; and yet condemned in his own conscience for want of knowing it. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified (manifestly and in his own conscience) by faith.

At the bottom of the same 15th page the author says, "*if the elect were justified from eternity, they never could fall nor be in a lost condition.*" What ignorance! whereas God's chusing them to salvation implies, that he viewed them in that state in *Adam* before the choice was made; and he did not chuse them in Christ to prevent their falling *by sin*; but to prevent their falling into Hell *for* their sin, as before observed, and therefore Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, as were all his people as viewed in Adam; and the coming of Christ in the flesh was to fulfil his covenant engagements with his Father, on the behalf of those his people.

He tells us in page 16th, "*if a man be justified before he believes as the Antinomians say he is; was not that a true charge, nay but he deceiveth the people?*"

Now you have to observe, an Antinomian is

one who is *against the moral law*, and says he has nothing to do with it ; but as I never have met with such an one since I have been in Hull, and as my sermon on *Reconciliation* will inform the reader that I am not of that number, I shall say no more about it ; but this I will venture to say, that though as considered in *Adam* we were condemned and lost ; yet as considered in *Christ*, we were justified before God, and that too *before* we believed, though we were not justified in our own consciences till *after* we believed. Nor can the author of *Justification masked* overturn this truth, unless he can prove that we were not chosen in Christ till *after* we believed ; for if the *head* be justified *before* God, so must the *members* ; and if the *members* be condemned, so must the *head*.

He tells us towards the close of the above-mentioned page, “ *if men were justified from eternity, nothing could be laid to their charge ; if so, where is the justice of God the Father, in causing the sword to awake against the man that was his fellow ? &c.* ” I answer because Christ in the counsel of peace became a surety for his people, took their debt upon himself, and promised to pay it ; to fulfil which promise, was the errand upon which HE came in the flesh. Therefore if the author could but see it just of a *creditor* to demand the debt of a *surety*, which he has taken upon himself, when the time agreed upon between them is expired ; he might see the justice of God, in punishing his own Son, for his people's sins.

Page 17th, he asks “ *what use can it be for the spirit to convince the Elect-world of sin if they were*

were pardoned from eternity? what need is there for him to apply that blood which cleanses us from all sin, when sin was done away from eternity?"

Now here we may observe with our Lord, that the *whole* need not a physician, but they that are *sick*; and till a man feels his disease, he will prize neither the physician, nor yet his medicine, and although it is a scriptural truth, that Christ *hath* put away sin (before God) by the sacrifice of himself, * or he never will put it away; yet, it is the spirit's work to convince of sin and put away the guilt thereof out of the conscience. And although it is a glorious truth, that God doth not impute sin to his people, having laid it all upon Christ; † yet, that does not set aside the necessity of the spirit's applying the blood of Christ to purge the conscience from dead works; at which time that which was before an *evil* conscience becomes a *good* one. It is a pity, the author cannot make a proper distinction between Christ's putting away sin *before God*, and the spirit's putting away the guilt thereof out of the *believer's conscience*.

But now let us proceed to the 19th page where the author informs us, that "*he infers that a man is justified before God by faith; but in his own conscience and before men he is justified by works.*"

Let us examine this inference. "*A man is justified before God by faith.*" Now if you ask what the author calls faith, he tells you in page 22d, "*it is the most immanent grace of the spirit.*"

Therefore if his doctrine be true, we are

* Heb. ix. 26. † Rom. iv. 8. Isai. liii. 6.

justified before God, by a *grace of the spirit*. And yet he tells us in page 8th that “*justification is not a work of the holy spirit in our hearts.*”

Here we may observe my brethren, that he has put *faith* as the *matter* of a sinner’s justification *before God*; instead of the *obedience of Christ*, or the redemption that is in him; although the apostle tells us, that we are justified (viz. before God) freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and that by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.* And if this have not a tendency to embarrass the minds of his hearers and to mislead them, I know not what has.

Now you may remember, that he has before said, that the *object* of justification is an *ungodly Saint*, which is not to be found neither in *Heaven, Earth* nor *Hell*; and here he tells you, that a man is justified *before God* by a *grace of the spirit*, so that the sum of both is this, an “**UNGODLY SAINT** is justified before God by a *grace of the spirit.*” Alas what divinity!!! I have been told indeed, that some other ministers in this Town have had a hand in this publication; but at present I entertain a better opinion of their understanding, than to think that they would have suffered such nonsense to have passed through their hands; therefore let the *author* have all the honor of it.

But let us now proceed and examine the other part of this inference, which reads thus, “*but in his own conscience and before men by works.*” One would think that the author must

* Rom. iii. 24.—v. 19.

have some more perfect works than this performance is, or he could never be justified in his own conscience by them.

But however, we may observe here that *good works* are put in the place of *faith*, for had he said, we are justified before God in the righteousness of Christ, (as he did in his 8th page) in our own consciences by faith, and before men by our works ; it would have been more consistent with the word of God. But as to good works, although they who have believed, will be careful to maintain them, as the apostle says ;* yet he does not add, that you may be justified in your consciences by them ; *but these things are good and profitable unto men*, and whoever abounds in them is freed from condemnation, or justified before men ; but as to peace of conscience, that is enjoyed in a way of believing.

In his 21st page he tells us, that “ *if eternal justification is not founded on scripture nor reason, it cannot be true,*” which implies that if it be founded on both, then it must be true. Now Paul tells us, that there is no condemnation to them, which are in Christ Jesus, † and as we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, ‡ then we must be justified before God as early.—Again as nothing can be laid to the charge of God’s elect, § then all God’s elect must be justified before him in Christ’s righteousness, which righteousness is called an everlasting righteousness ; || a righteousness everlastingly accepted of God, on the behalf of his people.

Nor is this doctrine contrary to *reason*, for as

* Tit. iii. 8. † Rom. viii. 1. ‡ Eph. i. 4. § Rom. viii. 33. || Dan. ix. 24.

Christ was set up as *Mediator* from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was ; * it must be on the behalf of his people, who were then viewed by him, as fallen creatures in Adam ; or they could not have been chosen in Christ to salvation. Beside, Christ became a *surety* in the covenant of grace, took his people's debt on himself, and gave his Father a promise, or bond, saying, lo I come to do thy will O God. And you know it is quite reasonable for a creditor to acquit a debtor, after he has accepted his surety's bond ; nay, the creditor must be unjust not to do it. Therefore as the doctrine of *eternal justification before God* is agreeable both to *scripture* and *reason* it must be true, according to our author's own reasoning.

He tells us also in the same page, that " *to drink in unsound doctrines is an awful sign of reprobation.*" Therefore it will not be amiss to compare the author's ideas with the word of God.

First, As the idea of *a time justification before God* represents sin to be charged to, and God angry with his people ; it must be an error.—For God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them ; and hath committed unto us (his ministers) the word of RECONCILIATION.

Secondly, As *a time justification before God* sets aside the atonement, it must be an error.—For he hath made peace (on God's part) by the blood of his cross, and by him we have received the atonement.

Thirdly, As *a time justification before God* represents Christ and his members condemned be-

fore him, this must be an error ; because they are all acquitted by justice, of which the resurrection of Christ from the dead is a manifest proof.

Fourthly, The scripture informs us, we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, preserved in Christ and called ; but this man says, we are *grafted into Christ on believing*, though not a word of grafting into Christ is mentioned in all the Bible, therefore this must be an error.

Fifthly, The apostle says, there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ ; and that nothing can be laid to the charge of God's elect, as such.—But this man says, “ *we are condemned before God till we believe*,” and therefore sin must be charged, without which there could be no condemnation ; which certainly is a very great error.

Sixthly, The apostle says we are justified (viz. before God) through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus ; * but this man says “ *we are justified before God by faith*,” therefore this must be an error also.

Seventhly, The scripture says, God justifies the ungodly ;—but our author says, “ he justifies the believing sinner,” viz. the godly, for no real believer can be without God, or ungodly ; therefore this likewise must be an error.

Eighthly, The apostle says, it is God that justifies, this man says, “ *it is faith that justifies*.”

Ninthly, The word of God says, Christ hath put away sin (before God) by the sacrifice of himself ; this man represents that believing

* Rom. iii. 24.

puts it away ; for he tells us “ *we are condemned before God till we believe,*” but this also must be an error.—Now if drinking in errors or unsound doctrines be an awful sign of reprobation, what can be more applicable to the author, than *thou art the man.*

As it would be wrong of us to cast away the precious with the vile, and to reject a little *truth*, because it stands among a deal of *error* ; I wish to make a remark on a few words which he has dropped in his 22d page concerning faith ; by which I suppose he means the faith of God’s elect, it reads thus, “ *faith is the most immanent grace of the spirit.*”

Here my brethren you have to remember, he is here speaking of the *thing itself*, and not of an *act* which is performed by virtue of *that thing* ; and herein he agrees with Bunyan, Brown, Butterworth, Mason, Romaine, Gurnall, &c. &c. who all of them call faith a *grace of the spirit*, and to me it appears plain from the word of God, that the faith of God’s elect is a *divine grace*, and believing is the immediate effect thereof.

The pious and learned Doctor Gill calls it “ *a working grace,*” * of which Christ himself is the author and finisher.

He tells us also, when speaking of the faith of God’s elect, † that “ *this faith is secured and made sure to them by their election ; they are chosen to, and through it to salvation, they believe in consequence and by virtue of it.*” And indeed, without this way of conceiving of faith, I do not see how we can account for

* Note on 1 Thes. i. 3. † Note on Tit. i. 1.

our Lord's words to Peter, * where he told him, *I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.* Now as a *grace of the spirit* it did not fail, though it did as to its acting. But if we consider faith itself to be “*an act of the mind giving credit to the divine testimony,*” as is by some asserted; then what follows but that Peter lost his faith. For did he give credit to the divine testimony, that *Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God*, when he denied him with oaths and curses? surely not.

Should any say, that Peter denied Christ through *fear*; I ask then, did Peter give credit to the divine testimony, which says, *he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it?* † surely he did not.

Should any say he did it through *shame*, did he then credit the divine testimony which says, whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory? ‡ surely he did not. For if he had, he would sooner have died for Christ, than he would have denied him.

From hence then we may observe, that if the *essence* of Peter's faith, were “*an act of the mind giving credit to the divine testimony,*” then the *essence* of Peter's faith failed, and Christ prayed in vain. But Christ did not pray in vain, nor did the *essence* of Peter's faith fail; and therefore the *essence* of his faith was not an act of the mind giving credit to the divine testimony; but a grace of the spirit in his heart maintained by Christ its author and finisher.

* Luke xxij. 32. † Matt. x. 39. ‡ Luke ix. 26.

But perhaps some may say, that Peter did not lose the *life of faith*; I reply the life of faith is *Christ himself*, beside our Lord did not say, I have prayed for thee that *the life of faith* fail not, but that thy FAITH fail not

Others perhaps may say, that Peter's faith did not fail *finally*; I reply, if Peter's faith failed but for an hour, he lost his *spiritual life* in that hour; for if Paul *lived by the faith of the Son of God*, Peter must *die* for want of it, but that could not be.

Having thus pointed out to you, what I think to be erroneous, and what I believe is truth; I would wish you to chuse the one, and refuse the other; and do not revile the author, or treat him as an enemy, but pity and pray for him as a mistaking man; that God may give him to know the truth, to love the truth, to embrace the truth, to preach the truth, to live the truth, and to die in the enjoyment of it, that he may be happy for ever and ever.

Now brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them, who are sanctified.

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